

THE COMMON SCHOOL JOURNAL.

VOL. VII.

BOSTON, MAY 1, 1845.

No. 9.

EIGHTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE BOARD  
OF EDUCATION.

(Continued from p. 129.)

It will be perceived, of course, that I have not treated this subject, in a strictly technical and legal manner, but have only endeavored to present those general views which I think would be decisive with a court, or if not with a court, would be so with the Legislature.

VOCAL MUSIC IN SCHOOLS.

There are about five hundred schools in the State where Vocal music is now practised. Half a dozen years ago, the number was probably less than one hundred.

In speaking of the subject of Vocal Music, in our Common Schools, I ought to make an apology for not having introduced it in former reports, rather than ask permission to refer to it now. The length of the reports heretofore submitted to the Board, has alone deterred me from including this among the topics discussed.

The preadaptation of the human mind to seek and to find pleasure in Music, is proved by the universality with which the vocal art has been practised among men. Each nation and each age steps forward as a separate witness, to prove the existence of musical faculties and desires, in the race; and their testimony is so unanimous and cumulative that no tribunal can withstand its force. In cultivating music, therefore, are we not following one of the plainest and most universal indications of nature; or rather of that Being by whose wisdom and benevolence nature was constituted? The Creator has made the human soul susceptible of emotions which can find no adequate expression but in song. Amongst all nations, joy has its chorus, and sorrow its dirge. Patriotism exults over national triumphs, in national songs; and religion yearns, and vainly strives to pour out its full tide of thanksgivings to its Maker, until the anthem and the hallelujah take the rapt spirit upon their wings and bear it to the throne of God.

Nature not only points, as with her finger, towards the universal culture of the musical art, but she has bestowed upon all men the means of cultivating it. The voice and the ear are

universal endowments;—or at most, the exceptions are few, and there is abundant reason to believe that these exceptions are not inherent in the nature of things, but only punishments for our infraction of the Physical Laws; and that the number of exceptions may be gradually reduced, until the calamity of privation shall be wholly removed;—and removed too, not by any repeal of the laws that inflict it, but only by obedience to their requirements. Substantially then, the voice and the ear are universal endowments of nature, and thus the means of enjoying the delights and of profiting by the utilities of music, are conferred upon all.

Of what other, among that beautiful sisterhood, called the Fine or the Elegant Arts, can this be said? Doubtless there is an instinct pointing to architecture, painting, sculpture, &c., as well as an instinct of music. Men might have reared arches, columns, and temples, as embodiments of their emotions of grandeur and sublimity, had no necessity for shelter ever prompted the erection of a human habitation. So painting and sculpture might have arisen to commemorate the lineaments or the deeds of the departed great and good, or to solace or to inspire their bereaved survivors. But how costly, for instance, are architectural gratifications. What years of labor, what expenditure of means, must precede the enjoyments they confer. In any previous age, and even in the present, how small is the portion of the human family to which the sight of a splendid edifice is accessible. But the pleasure resulting from the use of the human voice in song, is the common patrimony of mankind. The inmate of the lowliest dwelling as well as the master of the lordliest castle may enjoy them. He whose hard lot deprives him not only of the embellishments but even of the common comforts of life, may regale himself with the unpurchased “wealth of song.” The pleasures of music attend their possessor not only in the hours of prosperity, but in those of sorrow. Music may be a companion in the lone vigils of pain, or in the deeper solitude of bereavement. It may support and console, when no other of the benignant family of the Arts could give balm or anodyne to the wounded spirit.

In one respect, Vocal Music holds signal preëminence over Instrumental. The latter is too expensive a luxury to be within the reach of a great portion of mankind. But the instruments of vocal music levy no contributions upon another's skill, or our own money. They are the gratuity of nature, and in this respect, the common mother has rarely been unmindful of any of her children. Of the implements or contrivances by which many pleasures are produced, it is the vaunted recommendation, that they can be compacted in a small space and carried about by the traveller, on his person, or in his equipage, without cumbrousness. But, in this respect, we can say of this simple yet most exquisite mechanism,—the organs of the human voice,—what can be said of no contrivance or workmanship, prepared by human skill and designed for human enjoyment. No one can carry about his person or transport from place to place, a column, a statue, or a painting, however beautiful, or however

essential to his enjoyment, it may be; but the apparatus for singing is the unconscious companion of all; and we can often use it without hinderance when engaged in active occupations. Present at all times, unburdensome, a means of gratuitous solace, an inexpensive luxury,—what other of the refining arts offers inducements for cultivation so universal, or rewards that cultivation with bounties so generous and manifold?

Nature has drawn broadly the lines of another great distinction, which redounds with equal force, in favor of the vocal art. I refer to an organic difference, established in our spiritual constitution, between the gratifications of the intellect, and the pleasures of taste or sentiment. The intellectual powers are progressive in their nature. For stimulus they demand novelty. If fresh exertions are not rewarded by fresh truths, all exertion will soon cease. The mental athlete can no longer find pleasure in tossing the playthings of feathery lightness, that amused his childhood. He demands a solidity that will cohere in his grasp and a might that will match his strength. The philosopher cannot return to toys and bubbles. All his delight in the former phases of things dies out by familiarity, and he presses onward to the discovery of new truths. The ratiocinative mind, so long accustomed to logical processes that it has acquired an almost intuitive power of discerning remote conclusions on an inspection of premises, can no longer tread in those infantile steps, by which the consecutive stages in an argument or demonstration were once passed over. From the statement of the problem, it springs to the solution,—disdaining the tedious lingering, not less than the awkward movements, by which its laborious way from premises to conclusion, was once achieved. It is almost as impossible for a practised mind to imitate the slowness of childhood in its thoughts, as it would have been, in childhood, to equal the rapidity obtained by practice. But how different in all these respects, are the pleasures of sentiment. The earliest and simplest melodies or songs are capable of affording an ever-renewing delight. Though rehearsed a thousand times, they yield fresh enjoyment at every repetition. Even to the mature mind, they have lost none of the charms which invested them in its youth; and they are as congenial to the thoughtfulness of age as to the thoughtlessness of childhood. Their peculiar attribute is not to grow old; not to weary the oft-listening sense, not to pall upon the oft-attentive mind.\* Hence the admirable, the unequalled power of song to furnish pleasure or relief when other mental gratifications cannot be commanded; and even when others cannot be endured. When the energies of the intellect have been expended by severe application, or its elasticity has been destroyed by a weight of cares, or its vigor broken down by sickness;—when, from any cause, these onward-tending faculties can no longer find or create their natural diversions, it is then, that the simple and calm delights of music restore the energies that have

\* "Would one think," says J. J. Rousseau, "that an old dotard like myself, worn out with cares and troubles, should find myself weeping like an infant while I murmur, with a broken and trembling voice, the songs of my childhood?"

been wasted by toil, revivify the spirits languishing with care, or cause the dawn of joy to arise upon the long watches of sickness. There is not a condition of prosperity or of adversity, in human life, to which something cannot be found, in the wide compass of music, at once responsive and grateful. There is not a capacity in the nature of man so pure or lofty, that music is uncongenial to its exercise, nor a susceptibility so tender and delicate, as not to welcome its companionship. Its capacities enfold our capacities, as the atmosphere encompasses the globe.

There is still another attribute or quality of music too important to be unnoticed in developing its relations to mankind. It does not require any degree of perfection as a science, in order to become pleasing as an art. Doubtless in this, as in all other things, those who understand the subject best will enjoy it most; but still, proficiency is not indispensable to pleasure; and those who possess the art at all, realize an enjoyment fully proportioned to the degree of art they possess. It is not so in regard to many, and perhaps, most other human attainments; for a high degree of excellence in them must be reached before their rewards can be received. In music, however, a reward is bestowed corresponding with the degree of advancement gained, however limited that advancement may be. The ear of a musical amateur is pained at the rude carol of a rustic, but why should that rustic troll his song with such unwearying perseverance, if it were not joyous and exhilarating to himself? When the connoisseur pours out his condemnation or ridicule upon the unartistic specimens of the cottage, he is selfishly thinking of his own pleasure, instead of benevolently sympathizing with that of others. Were his heart as well cultivated as his ear, he would think with gratitude upon their resources of pleasure, instead of looking with disdain upon their want of skill. Probably their imperfect skill comes much nearer to a requital than his does, for the cost and the pains expended in acquiring it. This characteristic of the musical art,—to bestow at least a proportionate gratification, from the rudest beginnings to the highest excellence, is another of the bounties offered by nature upon its universal diffusion.

But we are not left to speculation and inference as to the beneficial effects of vocal music in public schools. The universal practice of music in most of the schools of the German states, for a long series of years, is an experiment sufficient of itself to settle the question of its utility. Probably it is not the least efficient among the means by which the schools of Prussia are kept in such admirable order, with so rare a resort to corporal punishment. In that kingdom no person could be approved as a teacher,—no individual, indeed, would ever think of presenting himself as a candidate for teaching, even in the obscurest school and at the lowest salary,—who was not master both of the theory and practice of vocal music, and also a performer upon one or more instruments. Aided by these influences, which conspire of course with others springing from the mildness and amiability of the teachers' character, and from their strong love of children, their high sense of duty, and emphatic-

ically, from their richly replenished and well disciplined minds, the Prussian teachers rarely have occasion for resorting to coercive measures; and thus the Prussian schoolroom becomes the abode of peace and love,—a bright spot where the sun of affection is rarely obscured even by a passing cloud. That whole country, indeed, is vocal with music. It adds zest to all social amusements. It saves the people from boisterous and riotous passions. Pervading all classes, it softens and refines the national character. It is the recreation of the student after his severe mental exertion, and it cheers on the laborer sweating at his toil. In some of the southern parts of Germany, where the shepherd's life still continues, and where, as in scriptural and patriarchal times, the shepherd *leads* forth,—he does not *drive* but *leads*,—his flock, the bells worn by the sheep are tuned to the common chord, so as never to make a dissonant sound; and as the flock are moving along the roads, or more quietly grazing in their pastures, there arises from the earth, as it were, an exhalation of music, which floats far and wide over the land, until at last it dies away in the distance, though not without leaving a genial and tranquilizing influence upon the soul.

But we have evidence nearer home of the beneficial effects of music in schools. Six years ago, by a vote of the Boston school committee, provision was made for giving, at the public expense, stated and regular instruction in vocal music, in all the Grammar and Writing schools of the city. The practice has continued without interruption to the present time. At the period of its introduction, great doubts were entertained by many intelligent people, as to the expediency of the measure. Some of the teachers themselves were alarmed, lest consequences unfavorable to the schools should follow in its train. But, after a trial of several years, the opinion of the same gentlemen was asked respecting its practical results; and, I believe with an entire unanimity, they awarded a favorable decision. Those who, in the beginning, had entertained distrust and apprehension respecting the adoption of the measure, with a creditable frankness, avowed themselves satisfied, and declared in its favor. From what I know of public opinion among the friends of education, in Boston, I do not believe it would now be possible to revoke the order by which music was introduced into its schools. Provision for instruction in the art of vocal music, in the above named schools, may therefore be regarded as a part of the generous policy of the city towards them, for an indefinite future period.

As a part of the general evidence bearing upon this subject, I may add, that, for half a dozen years past, I have made diligent inquiry of persons residing in various parts of the State, both as to the extent and the effect of vocal music in our schools; and from these sources of information, together with the accounts given by the school committees in their reports, I learn, that, wherever music has been introduced, it has commended itself both to the good sense and the good will of all parties concerned; and, in no instance whatever, that has come

to my knowledge, has it been discontinued, in consequence of being disapproved. Such too, so far as I have been able to ascertain, has been the result in other states, wherever a trial has been made.\* A decision so unanimous, from persons so well qualified to judge, seems to change the character of the question, from one of theory and speculation, to one of demonstrated fact. In a former part of this Report,—pp. 79—97,—I have stated, as nearly as could be ascertained, the number of schools in the respective towns, in which music was practised during the last year.

But to be more specific in presenting the claims of this subject to the attention of our community, I may say,

1st, That Vocal Music promotes health. It accomplishes this object *directly*, by the exercise which it gives to the lungs and other vital organs; and *indirectly*, by the cheerfulness and genial flow of spirits, which it is the especial prerogative of music to bestow. Vocal music cannot be performed without an increased action of the lungs; and an increased action of the lungs necessarily causes an increased action of the heart and of all the organs of digestion and nutrition. The singer brings a greater quantity of air in contact with the blood. Hence the blood is better purified and vitalized. Good blood gives more active and vigorous play to all the organs of absorption, assimilation and excretion. The better these functions are performed, the purer and more ethereal will be the influences which ascend to the brain. The latter is an organ so exquisitely wrought, that its finest productions are dependent upon the healthfulness of the vital processes below. A fit of indigestion annihilates a statesman's power, though a nation perishes for want of his counsels; and a fever disarms a warrior, before whom legions have trembled. But, on the other hand, energy and electric celerity of movement are generated in a well-formed brain, when it is supplied with healthful and highly oxygenated blood. Spontaneous effusions of serenity, of cheerfulness and of strength, are the natural results of wisely-managed physical organs; and these qualities serve to invigorate the health that produced them. Thus, by the action and reaction of the material and spiritual natures upon each other, a joyous and tuneful elasticity is dispensed to every part of the complex system of man. The scientific physiologist can trace the effects of singing, from the lungs into the blood; from the blood into the processes of nutrition, and back again into the blood, and into the nerves; and finally from the whole vital tissue into the brain, to be there developed into the flower and fruit of cheerfulness, increased health, increased strength, and a prolonged life, just as easily and as certainly as a skilful manufacturer can trace

\* The following is from the Second Annual Report of the Second Municipality of the City of New Orleans :

"A teacher of music is also employed, who devotes at least half an hour, three times a week, to each school, and thoroughly instructs the scholars in the rudiments, and exercises them in vocal music. The experience of another year fully sustains the previous estimate of its advantages."

It would be easy to fill pages with similar testimonials.

a parcel of raw material which he puts into his machinery, through the successive stages of being broken down, cleansed, softened, changed into new forms, and made to evolve new qualities, until it comes out at last, a finished and perfect product. In both cases, there may be various conspiring or disturbing forces, tending to aid or to defeat the result, but still, from beginning to end, the connection between cause and effect is as distinctly traceable, as is a broad white line running across a black surface.

In our climate the victims of consumption are a host. It is a formidable disease to males, and still more to females. About twenty per cent. of all the deaths that occur, are caused by consumption; and this estimate includes infancy and childhood, as well as adult age. Restricting the computation to adult life, probably one half or nearly one half of all the deaths that occur, are caused by this terrible disease alone. Vocal music, by exercising and strengthening the lungs, and by imparting gayety to the spirits, would tend to diminish the number of that sad procession whom we daily see hastening to an early tomb.

2d. Vocal music furnishes the means of intellectual exercises. All musical tones have mathematical relations. Sounds swelling from the faintest to the loudest, or subsiding from the loudest until "there is no space 'twixt them and silence," are all capable of being mathematically expressed. The formulas, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, &c.; or 128, 64, 32, 16, 8, 4, 2, are no more significant, to the mathematician, of certain fixed, natural, unalterable relations between numbers, than the tones of musical chords are to the scientific musician. Hence the intellect can be exercised on the relations of tones, as well as on the numbers, quantities, or magnitudes of arithmetic, algebra or geometry; and while music furnishes problems sufficient to task the profoundest mathematical genius that has ever existed, it also exhibits scientific relations so simple as to be within the schoolboy's comprehension. Music, therefore, has this remarkable property;—that it can address itself, with equal facility, either to the intellect or to the emotions,—to the head or to the heart,—tasking all the energies of the former, or gratefully responding to all the sentiments of the latter.

3d. But the social and moral influences of music far transcend, in value, all its physical or intellectual utilities. It holds a natural relationship or affinity with peace, hope, affection, generosity, charity, devotion. There is also a natural repugnance between music and fear, envy, malevolence, misanthropy. In ancient mythology, Nemesis and the Furies never sung. Dr. Potter has a just criticism on Milton, because, in his *Paradise Lost*, he represents Satan and his host as moving,

"In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood  
Of flutes and soft recorders,"—  
———"to soft pipes that charm'd  
Their painful steps," &c.

The Germans have a proverb to the effect that, in the house

where music comes not, the devil enters. "At Berlin," says Professor Stowe, "I visited an establishment for the reformation of youthful offenders. Here boys are placed, who have committed offences that bring them under the supervision of the police, to be instructed and rescued from vice, instead of being hardened in iniquity by living in the common prison with old offenders. It is under the care of Dr. Kopf, a most simple-hearted, excellent old gentleman; just such a one as reminds us of the ancient Christians, who lived in the times of the persecution, simplicity and purity of the Christian church. He has been very successful in reclaiming the young offender; and many a one who would otherwise have been forever lost, has, by the influence of this institution, been saved to himself, to his country and to God. As I was passing with Dr. K. from room to room, I heard some beautiful voices singing in an adjoining apartment, and on entering, I found about twenty of the boys sitting at a long table, making clothes for the establishment, and singing at their work. The doctor enjoyed my surprise, and, on going out, remarked, 'I always keep these little rogues singing at their work; for while the children sing, the devil cannot come among them at all; he can only sit out-doors there and growl; but if they stop singing, in the devil comes.' "

In my last Report, I gave some striking illustrations of the power of music.

Dr. Chalmers observes, "It says much for the nature and original predominance of virtue,—it may be deemed another assertion of its designed preéminence in the world, that our best and highest music is that which is charged with loftiest principle, whether it breathes in orisons of sacredness, or is employed to kindle the purposes and to animate the struggles of resolved patriotism; and that, never does it fall with more delightful cadence upon the ear of the delighted listener, than when, attuned to the home sympathies of nature, it tells, in accents of love and pity, of its woes, and its wishes for all humanity. The power and expressiveness of music may well be regarded as a most beauteous adaptation of external nature to the moral constitution of man, for what can be more adapted to his moral constitution than that which is so helpful as music eminently is, to his moral culture? Its sweetest sounds are those of kind affection. Its sublimest sounds are those most expressive of moral heroism; or most fitted to solemnize the devotion of the heart, and prompt the aspirations and the resolves of exalted piety."

As poor an authority as Napoleon was, on all ethical subjects,—unless taken by the rule of contraries, when he would be nearly perfect,—yet few men knew better than he did, how to appeal to human passions, or how to play off one passion against another. He has recorded his testimony respecting the efficacy of music over national predilections, even when fortified by long-descended traditions. In the history of his Egyptian conquest, it is related that, after he had subdued the organized, physical force of the nation, he sought to perpetuate his power, by a mastery over their sentiments and affections. For

this purpose, he wrote home to the Academy in Paris, to inquire what kind of music it would be expedient to employ in the mosques, and in the religious services of the country. His object was to mollify and subdue the hearts of the people, to make them yielding and receptive to the new influences which he wished to exert upon them, and to gain that conquest over their feelings by his arts, which he had achieved over their power by his arms.

Among the ancients, a power of working miracles was attributed to music; and, what is more remarkable still, no skeptic was found to deny it. Diseases were cured by song; a victory was won, not by the addition of numbers or of arms, but by firing the soldiery to greater efforts by higher martial strains; and even the steadfast rocks and trees were fabled to have sprung from their immobility and joined in the harmonious dance. These fables shadow forth a great truth. If men had not felt that music could exercise an almost irresistible sway over their feelings and purposes, they would never have ascribed to it a supernatural agency, nor referred its invention to the gods.

One of the most delightful attributes or characteristics of music is, its harmonizing, pacificating tendency. It may be employed as a grand mediator or peace-maker between men. Harmony of sound produces harmony of feeling. Can it have escaped the observation of any reflecting man, when present at a crowded concert, or at any numerously-attended musical festival, what a heterogeneous mass of human beings was before him? Competitors in business; rivals, almost sanguinary, in politics; champions of hostile creeds; leaders of conflicting schools in art or philosophy;—in fine, a collection and full assortment of contrarieties, and antagonisms;—and yet the whole company is fused into *one* by the breath of song! For the time being, at least, enemies are at peace; rivals forget their contests; partisans lay aside their weapons; and the bosoms that harbored acrimonious or vindictive feelings over which time seemed to have no power, are softened into kindness. All respond alike, all applaud in the same place; and men whose thoughts and feelings, an hour before, were as far asunder as the poles, or as the east is from the west, are brought as near together in feeling as they are in space. Who will deny homage to an art that can make men brethren, even for an hour?

If music has such power over men, is it not evident that it will have still greater power over children? I have heard of a family whose custom it was, on the expression or manifestation of ill-nature or untowardness by any one of the members, for all the rest to join instantly in a song; and thus the evil spirit was exorcised at once. Neither child nor man can be long angry *alone*. All but madmen will yield their passions, if they receive no sympathy from others while expressing them, or, if they are not kept alive by an answering passion in an opponent. How extensively may this principle be applied in the management and discipline of children in school; and surely music is one of the best instrumentalities for so benign a purpose.

But, grant the expediency of introducing vocal music into our Common Schools, and the question arises, what measures can be adopted to accomplish that end? Unhappily, there are but few persons in our community competent to teach the art even of vocal music. We are an un-musical,—not to say, an anti-musical people. No hereditary taste for the art has descended to us. Our Pilgrim Fathers were too stern a race, and their souls were occupied by interests too mighty and all-absorbing, to afford them either leisure or inclination to cultivate music as a refinement or an embellishment of life. Hence, throughout New England, since the first settlement of the colonies, a high degree of musical skill has been a rare accomplishment; and, with the exception of church music, the mass of the population have been strangers, if not worse than strangers, to the art. It is related, in the story of Lord Anson's voyage round the world, that he found, on one of the islands of the Pacific Ocean, the descendants of some dogs, whose ancestors had been left there by a previous circumnavigator. There was no game on the island, and the dogs, having no occasion for the use of their voice, had lost the power of barking. It is by the same cause,—long disuse,—that our people have lost the power of singing. Doubtless if those dumb dogs or their offspring had been placed in the midst of abundant game, their propensities for prey would have been excited anew, and their power of barking restored. By the use of means as appropriate for us, our lost taste for music, as well as the power of performance, may be recovered. What are some of those means?

In our large cities and towns, it is obvious, that there is sufficient pecuniary ability to employ a teacher of music expressly for the schools. It would be better were all our teachers competent,—as some of them are,—to give instruction in this art. One of the finest resources for the infusion of good feeling and for the expulsion of bad, would then be at the command of the teacher, at all times; and he might invoke its aid on any and every emergency. It is the common testimony of teachers, that occasionally there are days, when the cordiality and kindness that should characterize all schools, seem to have departed; when the nerves of the pupils appear to be on the surface, and all movements wound them. On such occasions, the tranquilizing influences of song are gratefully remedial. Its timely service is worth more to the school than the singing of an entire day, when a more auspicious spirit prevails. In most cases, with competent teachers, music would nearly or quite supersede the necessity of coercion, and thus work a vast economy of blows and tears. But where music has been taught to the pupils by a master of the art, the teacher, though not an adept himself, can superintend the exercises, and thus make it an auxiliary in the government of his school.

But a great majority of towns in the Commonwealth will feel themselves unable to employ one teacher for instruction in the common branches, and another teacher for music. To meet a portion of these cases, it may be said, that many persons are now acquiring the art as a part of their preparation

for becoming teachers. Vocal music is regularly taught at each of the Normal schools; and most of the pupils who go out from these institutions, will not fail to spread a knowledge of the art among their pupils. There is another resource. It sometimes happens, when the teacher is unable to lead, in a musical exercise, that some one of the older scholars in his school is able to do so. In such a case, there would be no objection to his availing himself of the skill of his pupil. A truly dignified teacher would not at all impair his dignity by showing respect for attainments superior to his own. The employment of a pupil, for such a purpose, would be little more than a temporary adoption, for a particular object, of one of the practices of a monitorial school.

But suppose teacher and pupil to be alike incompetent to give lessons, the cases will not be infrequent, where some gentleman or lady, belonging to the school district, will be sufficiently conversant with the art, to give instruction in it. In such a case, it would be a most benevolent and kindly office, if such a person would stately or occasionally visit the school, and impart the knowledge unattainable from any other source. A concert of action throughout the Commonwealth, in these and other ways, for introducing vocal music into our schools, would, in a very few years, so extensively diffuse a knowledge of the art, that scarcely a school would be found, having no access to a music-master, either in itself, or in its neighborhood; and thus a great desideratum, not only in our schools but in our community, would be supplied.

A question is sometimes asked, whether, if music cannot be taught scientifically, in our schools, it would be expedient to have it taught by rote. The answer to this question is found in the fact, that most if not all the social and moral effects of music will be realized, when it is practised as an art, as fully as though it were studied as a science. Its adaptation to the intellect depends on its scientific relations; its adaptation to the universal heart of mankind depends on its power to soothe, to tranquillize, or to enliven; to express the highest and most rapturous joys which ever thrill the human soul, or to pour a delicious oblivion over the wounded spirit.

In proportion to the extent to which vocal music is introduced into our schools, there will be, of course, a demand for songs and song books. If the subject of school books is important, the subject of song books can hardly be less so. The literary character and moral sentiment of the poetry which children learn, will have an abiding effect upon them through life;—or rather, it would be more correct to say, they will constitute a part of their moral nature, during their existence. While all poetry for children, therefore, should be intelligible and comprehensible by them, it should be select in diction, beautiful and graceful in style, and harmonious in versification. It should be such, in all points, as, in after-life, will never offend a mature and cultivated taste. In sentiment, it should inculcate all kindly and social feelings; the love of external nature; regard and sympathy for domestic animals; consideration and benevolence

towards every sentient thing, whether it flies, or creeps, or swims; all filial, all brotherly and sisterly affections; respect for age; compassion for the sick, the ignorant, the destitute, and for those who suffer under a privation of the senses or of reason; the love of country, and that philanthropy which looks beyond country, and holds all contemporaries and all posterity in its wide embrace; a passion for duty and a homage for all men who do it; and emphatically should it present such religious views as will lead children to fulfil the first great commandment,—to love the Lord their God with all their heart, and with all their soul, and with all their mind.

I close this Report with one reflection. The discordance between the life and history of man, on the one hand, as contrasted with the perfection of the universe in which he is placed, on the other, has been a theme for the lamentation of all moralists and sages, in all periods of the world; and it has infused pathos and elegiac mournfulness into the divinest strains of poetry and prophecy. Looking towards any portion of the great panorama of the universe,—whether it be in the heavens above or in the earth beneath, we behold, everywhere, effulgent proofs of Divine perfection. All is harmonious and complete; all perfect in design, and perfect in execution. All around us, conspicuous as angels clothed in shining raiment, stand the witnesses of Almighty goodness and love; and they cease not, day nor night, to declare the perfections of the Creator. The firmament with its revolving planets and steadfast constellations, is so beaming with glory even to the untaught eye, that one of the most contemplative and pious of our poets has said of it,—

"So bright, with such a wealth of glory stored,  
'T were sin in heathen not to have adored."

All parts of the inanimate earth, as far as science has been able to investigate its materials or its structure, are the evident workmanship of power guided by wisdom and love. The revolution of the seasons; the exhaustless source of light and of heat; the aerial circuit of the waters; the latent forces of nature which await the summons of man, and stand ready to do his bidding; the parts which cold and heat, electricity and magnetism, attraction and repulsion, play in the grand economy of nature; the principles of life which embody themselves in the myriad forms of vegetation; the structure and instincts of animals,—each so wonderfully fitted to its peculiar sphere;—all of them bear the impress and signet of a Divine mind and a Divine hand. To the eye of science and of religion, they are all inscribed, within and without, with the evidences of goodness, at once omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent. They all answer the purpose for which they were created,—obeying in all things the law of their constitution. It is only when we come to man, that we find proofs of lofty powers perverted, of glorious faculties eclipsed, of vast capacities for happiness, not lost merely, but turned into sources of sorrow and pain. He!—the highest of all created beings among which he is placed, mournfully

fails of his destiny, if that destiny be happiness acquired through duty;—it is he who sends out the only jarring note that mars the music of the spheres. Great and good men, in all ages,—prophets, apostles, the Savior, have mourned over this condition of humanity, and have toiled, prayed, agonized, for its recovery to obedience and felicity. They have longed, yearned, labored, for the day, when, with recuperative energies, man should rise from his guilty fall.

And already there has been great amelioration in the condition of the race. Whoever compares distant ages or epochs with each other, will find proofs of the slow, yet steady uprising of mankind. Like the light of the sun upon a dial-plate, we may not be able to see its motion, and yet we can see that it has moved. The fortunes of the race do not revolve in a circle, but in a spiral. So far as any improvement has been effected in the condition of mankind, by human agency;—so far as great national calamities have been averted, so far as great national crimes have been arrested, so far as the ravages of wide social demoralizations have been stayed; the general principle on which all progress and all reforms have proceeded seems to be this:—men wait for an accumulation of evils,—they wait and bear, until the accumulation becomes intolerable, and then they apply themselves to the work of removal or redress. Men waited until twelve centuries of religious persecution had been inflicted upon them, by government, before they took effective measures for the establishment of religious freedom. Our ancestors bore political oppression for a century and a half, before they pledged fortune, life and honor to resistance. For tens of centuries, men endured all the calamities and horrors of unnecessary war, until the historic aggregate of suffering and crime became too mighty to be longer borne; and it was then only that a portion of mankind began to open their eyes to its folly and wickedness. Men succumbed to the evils of intemperance, until those evils threatened to brutify and demonize the race, before they banded themselves together for disenthralment and ransom. Men looked quietly upon the atrocities of the slave trade, until a continent was emptied, and an ocean filled, with myriads of its victims. And so of those other crimes and calamities which have made the history of the world, like the roll of the prophet, a record of lamentations and mourning and woe. The shrieks, not only of one, but of hundreds of cargoes of slaves, fell in vain upon the dumb ear of society. The ruin of thousands and of tens of thousands of men, by intemperance, was insufficient to startle humanity from its guilty slumber. War had to pile the heaps of its slain mountain-high, and to pour out human blood with river-like width and depth, before men could be made to acknowledge its iniquities and its agonies. The fires of persecution burned for ages, the rack labored, the dungeon buried alive, before men vindicated their right to freedom of conscience. And so it has been in regard to all human evils. The first case rouses no man, alarms no man. The first hundred, or, perhaps, thousand cases, are borne with composure, if not with thoughtlessness.

They fail to stimulate either government or society to devise or seek for a remedy. Men wait until the tide of evil rises and desolates the land, again and again, before they will erect barriers against the deluge. Men will not hear the wind; they wait for the whirlwind. Men will not take warning from the cloud, they wait for the tempest. And the calamities which spring from ignorance, and a neglect of the social condition of the masses of the people, are no exception to this rule. Republics, one after another,—a splendid yet mournful train,—have emerged into being; they have risen to greatness, and surrounding nations have sought protection beneath the shelter of their power; but they have perished through a want of intelligence and virtue in the masses of the people.. They have been delivered over to anarchy and thence to despotism; and because they would not obey their own laws, they have been held in bondage by the laws of tyrants. One after another, they have been blotted from the page of existence, and the descendants of a renowned and noble ancestry have been made bond-men and bond-women;—they have been dishonored and trampled upon, on the very soil still choral with the brave deeds of their fore-fathers. Has a sufficient number of these victim-nations been sacrificed, or must ours be added to the tragic list? If men had been wise, these sacrifices might have been mitigated, or brought to an end, centuries ago. If men are wise, they may be brought to an end now. But if men will not be wise, these mournful catastrophies must be repeated again and again, for centuries to come. Doubtless, at some time, they will come to an end. When the accumulation of evils shall be so enormous and overwhelming, that humanity can no longer endure them, the adequate efforts for their termination will be made. The question for us is, has not the fulness of time now come? Are not the sufferings of past ages, are not the cries of expiring nations, whose echoes have not yet died away, a summons sufficiently loud to reach our ears, and to rouse us to apply a remedy for the present, an antidote for the future? We shall answer these questions, by the way in which we educate the rising generation. If we do not prepare children to become good citizens;—if we do not develop their capacities, if we do not enrich their minds with knowledge, imbue their hearts with the love of truth and duty, and a reverence for all things sacred and holy, then our republic must go down to destruction, as others have gone before it; and mankind must sweep through another vast cycle of sin and suffering, before the dawn of a better era can arise upon the world. It is for our government, and for that public opinion, which, in a republic, governs the government, to choose between these alternatives of weal or woe.

HORACE MANN,

*Secretary of the Board of Education.*

BOSTON, December 10, 1844.

MARCH OF INTELLECT IN ENGLAND.—At the Sandwich sessions on Thursday last, "twelve wise men" returned a verdict of not guilty in respect to a charge against a female prisoner, but accompanied their verdict with the expression of a hope *that she would never do it again.*

---

THE whole number of troops, on the American side, engaged in the Revolutionary war, was 288,134. Of these New England furnished 147,674, and Massachusetts alone, 83,162.

---

AT a late "Teachers' Institute," held in Saratoga county, State of New York, the following Resolution was adopted, which, though it may have been "calculated for the meridian of New York, will answer equally well" for all the schools in Massachusetts.—*Ed.*

"RESOLVED, That we deem the use of tobacco by the teacher, (to say nothing of its deleterious effects upon the human system,) incompatible with the proper and consistent performance of his duties, as the guide and exemplar to the youth placed under his care; and that we therefore respectfully and earnestly request all teachers every where to discontinue its use."

---

"SPIRIT OF LOVE.—Beyond all question, it is the unalterable constitution of nature, that there is efficacy,—divine, unspeakable efficacy, in love. The exhibition of kindness has the power to bring even the irrational animals into subjection. Show kindness to a dog, and he will remember it; he infallibly returns love for love. Show kindness to a lion, and you can lead him by the mane, you can thrust your hand into his mouth, you can melt the untamed ferocity of his heart into an affection stronger than death. In all God's vast creation, there is not a living and sentient being, from the least to the largest, that is insensible to kindness. What an inducement to practise it!"

---

THE highest ideal of public instruction, at present, scarce extends beyond the first rudiments of knowledge. The key to the storehouse of science is placed in our hands, but we are scarce led within the portals, and the treasures which are there are all unnoticed and unexplored. It would be easy, if a due interest in the subject existed, to make our Common Schools something higher and better than they are now; they might look beyond what is merely necessary for the common business of life, and seek to elevate the character, enlarge the mind, and open to us a field for higher and more noble enjoyments.—*Barrre Gazette.*

---

"LITTLE minds endeavor to support a consequence by distance and hauteur. But this is a mistake. True dignity arises from condescension, and is supported by noble actions. Superficialness is almost a certain mark of low birth and ill breeding."

"**JUSTICE.**—Justice is as strictly due between neighbor-nations as between neighbor-citizens. A highwayman is as much a robber when he plunders in a gang, as when singly, and a nation that makes an unjust war, is only a great gang."

**NORMAL SCHOOLS.**—"Spain will soon be, in one thing, in advance of us. Normal Schools have been founded in each one of the civil governments,—the provincial deputation paying the expense. That of Tarragona is in excellent order, and its chief, an intelligent young man, has copied from the Normal schools of France."—*Extract from a letter by a recent American traveller in Spain.*

**EFFECTS OF DRAINING, ON HUMAN LIFE.**—The Rev. Professor Buckland, at a public meeting lately held in Oxford, said that in the parish of St. Margaret, Leicester, containing 22,000 inhabitants, it appeared that one portion of it was effectually drained, some parts but partially so, and others not at all. In the latter, the average duration of life is thirteen years and a half, while in the same parish where the draining is only partial, the average is twenty-two years and a half, thereby showing the frightful effects of a bad atmosphere.

#### A MOTHER'S LOVE.

Hast thou sounded the depth of yonder sea,  
And counted the sands that under it be?  
Hast thou measured the height of heaven above?  
*Then mayest thou mete out a mother's love.*  
Hast thou talked with the blessed, of leading on  
To the throne of God some wandering son?  
Hast thou witnessed the angel's bright employ?  
*Then mayest thou speak of a mother's joy.*  
Evening and morn hast thou watched the bee  
Go forth on her errands of industry!  
The bee for herself hath gathered and toiled,  
But the mother's cares are all for her child.  
Hast thou gone with the traveller Thought afar,  
From pole to pole, and from star to star?  
Thou hast,—but on ocean, earth or sea,  
The heart of a mother has gone with thee.  
There is not a grand inspiring thought,  
There is not a truth by wisdom taught,  
There is not a feeling pure and high,  
That may not be read in a mother's eye.  
And ever since earth began, that look  
Has been to the wise an open book,  
To win them back from the lore they prize,  
To the holier love that edifies.  
There are teachings on earth, and sky, and air,  
The heavens the glory of God declare!  
But more loud than the voice beneath, above,  
He is heard to speak through a mother's love.

EMILY TAYLOR.